

PEAKS OF SHALA

[628] woman he would at that moment have been
576 dead. Our Shala men, with perfect courtesy, went through the formalities of greeting on the trail, and this is the form, translated to me by Rexh:

"Long life to you!"

"And to you, long life!"

"How could you?" meaning, "How could you get here?"

"Slowly, slowly, little by little."

No one who has ever seen those trails can doubt it.

291. The Shoshi man sat down, our men offered him cigarettes, and up the trail came a woman of Shosh¹. She wore a tight, bell-shaped skirt of horizontal black and white stripes, made of cloth heavier and thicker than felt, the twelve-inch-wide marriage belt of heavy leather studded with pounds of nails, and a jacket covered with three-inch-thick fringe. Two heavy braids of black hair hung forward on her breasts, a colored handkerchief was bound around her head, and her face, smoothly weather browned, large eyed, delicately shaped, was the most beautiful that I

[854] had ever seen. On her back, held by woven woolen straps that crossed between her breasts, was a cradle tightly covered by a thick blanket;

[283] in one hand she held a bunch of raw wool, and from the other dangled a whirling spindle. Her feet were bare, and as she came up that trail which had exhausted me she sang softly to herself, dexterously spinning thread from the bunch of wool.

¹[Albanian Mountain tribe -- [12] Analyst]

291 which is bought from silversmiths in the town, and the woman is clothed.

These costumes are undoubtedly ancient. Some of their elements may be traced back to the early Mediterranean, others to the central European Iron Age. However, the Ghegs themselves do not make all parts of them, but carry on the tradition by demand, like the Crow Indians for whom Stetson has, for decades, been manufacturing a special kind of hat.

• 283 The basic cloth is woven at home. The farmer gives his wife the necessary wool from his sheep, both white and black. She cards it with a homemade device, either a flick bow or a nail-studded card, and spins it. Her spinning kit consists of a distaff, a spindle, and a basket. Holding the distaff in one hand, she twists the wool with the other, and winds it onto the spindle in the basket. Whenever she has nothing else to do, or when she is walking along the trail, the Albanian housewife dutifully spins, and her spinning has soon become a reflex action, like knitting or bead-telling.

286 When she has enough wool, she begins weaving. The Albanian loom is an ordinary European 2-beam affair, similar to those used in the Hebrides and the Kentucky mountains. It has a wooden frame, 2 beams or rollers between which the warps are stretched, a wooden batten, and a foot-operated heddle. The bobbin, within its shuttle, is hand-thrown. The men buy all of the delicate parts of this loom in the town, from turners. The rest of it they make at home. The loom is kept mounted only while a length of cloth is being woven. When not in use the loom is taken apart and piled in a corner with other household impedimenta.

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286 Once the cloth has been woven, it must, if intended for masculine use, be fulled. This involves keeping it wet, working it about, and pounding it for several hours. The mountaineers employ an ingenious water-powered device for this purpose. Several writers have observed these mills; Nopcsa has drawn one.⁵ I saw several. The fulling mill consists of an open-air wooden structure powered by an overshot water wheel. A smaller stream of water runs through a trough to wet the cloth. The wheelshaft is studded with four wooden

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⁵ Nopcsa, 1925, p. 134, fig. 99.

586 Kadi, his wife may claim to be released from her vows to him. Other sufficient causes for divorce are ill-treatment, aberration of mind, and excessive corpulence on the part of the husband.

562 The Moslem Albanian, when he marries, is, like the
462 Osmanli, bound to provide his wife with food, clothes, and shelter in keeping with his position and means, and cannot require her, as do the Christians, to earn money for herself or for him by her labour. She, on her side, is required to obey her husband and never oppose his wishes, to abstain from anything likely to annoy or vex him, and to watch over the interests of the family, and, if poor, she must do the work of the house, cook the food, do the dairy work, spin the wool and flax necessary for the family use. The
[283] Albanian generally has no fondness for field labour, which he usually leaves to the women, children, and old men, and, when he does not follow the calling of a soldier or trader, prefers wood-cutting, attending to his vineyard, or, still more, tending sheep on the mountains, a pursuit which combines laziness with-peril.

463 Besides those who enter the military service, numbers seek fortune in the large towns of Turkey, as traders, *cavasses*—a kind of orderly attached to Embassies, Consulates, banks, and other public offices, in which capacity they are much esteemed for their devotion to their employers—or in other positions of trust. As soon as they have amassed sufficient money to enable them to do so, they return home and marry, in order to prove themselves respectable members of
[543] society. After a brief sojourn in the bosom of their
[591] families they return to their employment, leaving